



3848 VETERANS DRIVE / TRAVERSE CITY, MI 49684
(231) 941-1620 / FAX: (231) 941-1588
www.garfield-twp.com ~ updated frequently!

SPRING 2020

Garfield

Charter Township

SERVING THE CITIZENS OF NORTHERN MICHIGAN

TOWNSHIP HOURS

Monday—Thursday
7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
CLOSED FRIDAYS

HOLIDAY HOURS

Township offices will be closed for the observance of the following holidays:
Presidents' Day — Feb. 17th
Presidential Primary —
March 10th
Memorial Day — May 25th

ELECTED OFFICIALS

CHUCK KORN.....SUPERVISOR

JEANE BLOOD LAW.....TREASURER

LANIE McMANUS.....CLERK

MOLLY AGOSTINELLI.....TRUSTEE

STEVE DUELL.....TRUSTEE

DENISE SCHMUCKAL.....TRUSTEE

DAN WALTERS.....TRUSTEE

STAFF

HILARY ALPERS.....APPRAISER

JUSTIN BIGBEE.....APPRAISER

AMY L DEHAAN.....ASSESSOR

RICH DERKS.....BUILDING INSPECTOR

MICHAEL GREEN...ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

STEVE HANNON...DEPUTY PLANNING DIRECTOR

KAREN LEAVER.....ADMIN ASSISTANT

CHLOE MACOMBER....DEPUTY TREASURER

DEREK MORTON.....CODE ENFORCEMENT

DEREK MORTON.....PARKS STEWARD

BILL MOUSER.....FACILITIES MANAGER

KATHLEEN ROON....OFFICE COORDINATOR

AMY SIMON....BUILDING & LAND USE ASST.

CARL STUDZINSKI.....BUILDING OFFICIAL

JOHN SYCH.....PLANNING DIRECTOR

BETTY TEZAK.....DEPUTY CLERK

OUR MISSION

As neighbors, we work together to create a community where our residents and businesses thrive, our natural resources are protected and enjoyed, our visitors are welcomed and appreciated, and our high quality of life is promoted.

FROM THE CLERK'S OFFICE

Have you signed up to be on the Permanent Absentee Application List? All registered voters are eligible to receive an Absentee Ballot after filling out an application requesting a ballot for each election. The last day we can mail an absentee ballot is the Friday before the election, March 6, 2020, so please return your applications as soon as possible.

There are three scheduled elections in 2020, and an open date for a possible Special Election in May. First is the Presidential Primary on March 10, 2020. Second is the August Primary on August 4, 2020 and the Third election is the General Election on November 3, 2020.

If there is a Special Election it will be on May 5, 2020, but nothing is scheduled at this time.

The Clerk's office is open Monday—Thursday, 7:30am-6:00pm. Also, the Clerk's office will be open on Saturday, March 7, 2020 from 8:00am—4:00pm to issue absentee ballots.

We encourage anyone who is interested in working during the elections to stop in and fill out an application.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:

Feb 14th – Winter Tax Due Date (last day to pay without interest/penalty is Feb 18th).

Feb 20th – Personal Property Statements or Small Business Exemption forms due for business owners.

March 2nd – Last day to pay Real Property Taxes before transferring unpaid balances to County

Treasurer.

March 9th – March Board of Review meets (if you think your property value is too high, contact the assessing office at 231-941-1620 before this date).

March 10th – WE WILL BE CLOSED FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY.

FROM THE TREASURER'S OFFICE

After earning her Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, Chloe Macomber came to Garfield Township and has served as Deputy Treasurer for over five years. During her time here, Chloe has accomplished and earned many certifications and accreditations including, Michigan Certified Professional Treasurer (MiCPT), Michigan Certified Assessing Officer (MCAO), Michigan Township Governance Academy Credential, and has attended many other educational classes.



In January 2020, Chloe earned her most recent certification of Certified Public Funds Investment Manager (CPFIM). This national certification is through the Association of Public Treasurers of the United States and Canada and is an accreditation given to those who have taken the class and passed the test on investing and managing public funds. Chloe continues to show interest in continuing her knowledge and education to benefit and protect our Township.

We congratulate Chloe for her most recent accomplishment.

IS YOUR SMALL BUSINESS TAX EXEMPT?

As a small business owner, you can legally pay **no Personal Property taxes!**
And, avoid the hassle of completing annual Personal Property statements!

**If your small business paid Personal Property taxes in 2019,
simply complete Form 5076 COMPLETELY, sign it AND
file it with the Assessor (postmarked) by February 20, 2020,
to become EXEMPT!**

Does your business have personal property worth less than \$80,000 (true cash value)? You may qualify to file Form 5076 - Small Business Property Tax Exemption Claim Under MCL 211.9o. And, if Form 5076 was filed for 2019, and the exemption was granted, it will continue until the taxpayer no longer qualifies.

No more Personal Property statements of any kind!

If the business makes purchases of equipment that put them over the \$80,000 threshold, taxpayers are required to file Rescission Form 5618 indicating they no longer qualify for the exemption AND a personal property statement (form L-4175) no later than February 20th of the year the property is no longer eligible. Failure to file Form 5618 will result in significant penalty and interest.

Taxpayers are reminded that they must be able to provide evidence to support their exemption at the request of the Assessor. Assessors may audit the personal property records of businesses within their jurisdiction. It is important (and required by MCL 211.22) that taxpayers keep accurate personal property records.

Personal property forms are available in the Assessor's Office or on-line at: www.garfield-twp.com/personalproperty.asp OR https://www.michigan.gov/taxes/0,4676,7-238-43535_72736---,00.html

Taxpayers with questions about this or any other personal property reporting requirements are encouraged to call the Assessors Office (231-941-1620).



FROM THE ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

In Garfield Township, property owners are encouraged to stop in and review their property records regularly, which may reduce the need for a valuation appeal before the Township's Board of Review. Assessing staff can help ensure that the records are accurate. If something is incorrect, those items can be corrected to reflect what is actually on the property. Nearly 6,900 properties are valued annually - it is impossible to visit them all each year and to be 100% accurate, so it is important that taxpayers help.

Michigan's property tax system was instituted early in our history and provides funding for education and local government. The system relies on the determination of Fair Market Value. In order to maintain the system's integrity, routine property visits are necessary and are made by the three agencies charged with maintaining the property tax system.

The Local Assessor determines the value of each parcel annually. To accomplish this, a mass appraisal system (based on a construction cost manual, modified by similar, sold properties) is used. The costs used to value buildings require exterior measurements of the buildings, and relies on property visits to accurately catalog the property's land and building attributes (record card review).

The County Equalization Department (CED) determines proper overall assessment levels for each unit in each property

class within the county. Equalization studies are used to make these determinations, and also require property visits of sold properties and/or appraisals on random samples selected each year. Value conclusions are made using the same cost manual and procedures that Assessors are required to use.

The State Tax Commission (STC) through the Property Services Division (PSD) monitors both the Assessor and CED throughout the annual assessment cycle. PSD staff may make random property visits in the monitoring process, which leads to the STC determination of State Equalized Value (SEV). Value conclusions are made using the same cost manual and procedures used by Assessors and CED.

These routine property visits depend on property owner participation. The property tax system relies on a three-tiered check-and-balance process that requires these visits to maintain its integrity. As a property owner, you may choose whether to participate. Simply write or email us stating your request. We hope you will participate because accurately cataloging a property's land and building attributes for the record is beneficial to the property owner and essential to the property tax system.

If you have questions about your property record, valuation or anything else assessing related, please do not hesitate to stop in or call us.

FROM THE BUILDING DEPARTMENT



Construction activity in 2019 was one of the strongest we have had in the Township. I know we've said that previously in recent years, but 2019 was statistically our best year since 2005. Once again there was an increase in single family homes for 2019 but as always, commercial projects continue to be the leader in construction value.

The building department is a busy place, but we work hard to have a quick turn around on plan reviews and issuing building permits, while performing timely inspections. As always, if you have any questions regarding building projects, feel free to contact us. We also have free code booklets with valuable information regarding decks, swimming pools, energy code, new homes and basic code requirements.

WELCOME TO THE TOWNSHIP

We are sorry to see Deputy Chris Halleck leave, but he has retired as of December 11, 2019. Taking his place is our new CPO, Roger Grotefendt. We look forward to working with Roger. Please stop in and welcome him to our Township!



GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION

As part of the ongoing effort to improve the overall condition of public roads in our county, it is common to work outside of the paved surface of the roads in front of your residence. Sometimes the removal of hard landscaping (stone or brick structures) is necessary, drainage ditching can impact sprinkler systems. Keeping improvements out of the right-of-way will ease frustration and inconvenience as our crews work on your road.

Residents are advised all items located within the existing road right-of-way, which is 33' from the center of the road, are at risk and may be subject to damage and/or removal which WILL NOT be reimbursed. This includes all landscaping materials, sprinkler heads, fencing, trees and shrubbery. The ONLY item that may remain within this 33' area is your mailbox, which may be removed and reinstalled as part of the project.

FROM THE PLANNING OFFICE

The Planning Department has continued working on the Barlow Garfield Neighborhood Plan. This neighborhood plan will be incorporated into the Township Master Plan and help guide future development for part of the east side of the township including both sides of the street on portions of Barlow Street, South Airport Road, Garfield Avenue, and surrounding sites.



The first full draft of the Barlow Garfield Neighborhood Plan was reviewed by the Planning Commission at their January 22 meeting. The plan incorporates research about the neighborhood including demographics, history, and current trends impacting the area. The plan also takes into account the public input gathered so far from the public input session in October, an online survey, the presentation by Bob Gibbs in November, and a survey sent by mail to all property owners in the neighborhood. This research and public input were used to create a draft strategic plan and development guidelines for the neighborhood.

Members of the public are invited to attend the next Planning Commission meeting on **Wednesday, February 26 at 7:00 PM at Garfield Township Hall** to review and comment on the next full draft of the plan. Over the next few months, the full plan will also be posted online for public comment and a final public hearing will be held before the plan is adopted by the Township Board. The plan is tentatively scheduled to be adopted by the Township Board in late spring 2020.

For updates on the Barlow Garfield Neighborhood Plan, visit the project website:

<http://www.garfield-twp.com/barlowgarfield.asp>

FROM THE ZONING OFFICE



Please allow us to welcome Derek Morton as our new Code Enforcement Officer and Parks Steward.

As a local business owner and past K-9 Officer with the Grand Traverse County Sheriff's Department, Derek is a familiar face to many in the community.

Feel free to contact Derek at our offices by phone or email at: dmorton@garfield-twp.com if you need any assistance in resolving any township code enforcement issues.

PARKS AND RECREATION

It's not too early to book your park reservations for 2020.

Applications can be downloaded from our website or picked up from the reception desk at the Township Hall. Remember that reservations work on a first come, first serve basis. A deposit is required to reserve the date.

You have several covered pavilions to choose from as well as reserving our multi-purpose field.

MAKE SURE TO SAVE YOUR DATE!



REMEMBRANCES

It has been a difficult winter for Garfield Township's personnel due to the passing of a family member -

Tom Schmuckal, who worked for Garfield Township for a number of years, died on January 14, 2020. Tom was the husband of Trustee, Denise Schmuckal.

SPRING FIRE PREVENTION CHECKLIST

The smell of spring is in the air and that means it's time to clean up the yard and the garage! Time to rake up dead debris and pull all the junk out of the garage that got tossed in when the weather got cold. It's also an opportune time to tend to outdoor fire hazards.

Grand Traverse Metro Fire would like to give you some tips to make this task easier:

Make sure that your address is visible from the road. House numbers should be 4" tall and highly visible from both directions.

Gather up miscellaneous boxes, cardboard, newspapers, etc., and recycle them.

Gather up all dirty rags that may have been used to clean up oil, grease, gas or other combustibles and properly dispose of them. If you keep some of these put them in properly labeled and sealed metal containers. Store gasoline and other hazardous combustibles in the shed or detached garage. Store propane tanks outdoors.

Pulling the grill out? Be sure to keep it 3' away from the house, deck, eaves and vegetation.

Check propane grills/firepit hoses and connections for any leaks or splits.

Cleaning up dead vegetation? Keep it away from the house. Burning of brush and yard debris is not allowed. Please see our website for details:

<https://gtmetrofire.org/fire-prevention/burnpermit/>

Do you have a fire extinguisher in the garage? If not, this is a perfect time to get one. Make sure it is properly serviced and ready for use.

While you are tending to the outdoor cleanup, have another family member check your home's smoke alarms. Test each alarm, replace batteries where needed and remember that your alarms should be less than 10 years old.



REGARDING SUMMER & WINTER TAXES:

As a courtesy to our residents, Garfield Township accepts postmarks for tax due dates (not obligated by law).

CAUTION:

Online bill payments often use bulk mailings that do not include a postmark. Payments received after the due date with no postmark will be considered late.

The Township Board is always looking for residents to serve on various boards and commissions. Please send a letter of interest to the Township Supervisor at the township hall if this is something you might be interested in. Get involved in your community!

The Township Board meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 6:00 pm.

The Planning Commission meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm.

The Zoning Board of Appeals meets on an as needed basis on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 6:00 pm.

The Parks and Recreation Commission meets the 1st Monday of every other month at 6:00 p.m.

All meetings take place at the Garfield Township Hall unless stated otherwise on the agenda.

